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Latin America

REGIONAL AND POLITICAL ANALYSIS

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RP ALA 77-056
8 September 1977

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LATIN AMERICA

8 September 1977

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This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Latin America Division, Office of Regional and Political Analysis, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence and from other agencies within the Intelligence Community. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Argentina: UNITAS Pullout

Argentina's decision last week to cancel its participation in UNITAS XVIII, a joint Latin American - US naval training exercise, reflects official dismay over US security assistance and human rights policies.

Although the government cited the unavailability of spare parts as the reason for declining to join the annual exercise, its decision was based largely on political considerations. The Argentines are particularly concerned about the Kennedy-Humphrey amendment halting all military cooperation after 30 September 1978 and the conditions imposed on the prospective purchase of eight Bell helicopters. The government's dismay over security assistance matters is abetted by interruptions in the flow of spare parts for US-supplied equipment and the withdrawal of the US military group from Argentina.

Domestic political considerations also influenced the decision on UNITAS. President Videla probably believed that the decision was necessary to maintain the support of the military hardliners who have severely criticized him for being too accommodating to recent US official visitors. The officers apparently saw the UNITAS exercise as an opportunity to test Videla's prestige when confronted with the demands of Argentine nationalism and pride. Videla probably timed the notice of cancellation before he left for the US this week to avoid the accusation that he was unable to persuade Washington to change its policies and that his trip was a failure. [redacted] 3.3(b)(1)

Despite earlier indications that Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay would join Argentina in withdrawing from UNITAS, there are as yet no signs that the others will follow Argentina's lead and pull out of UNITAS. [redacted] 3.5(c)

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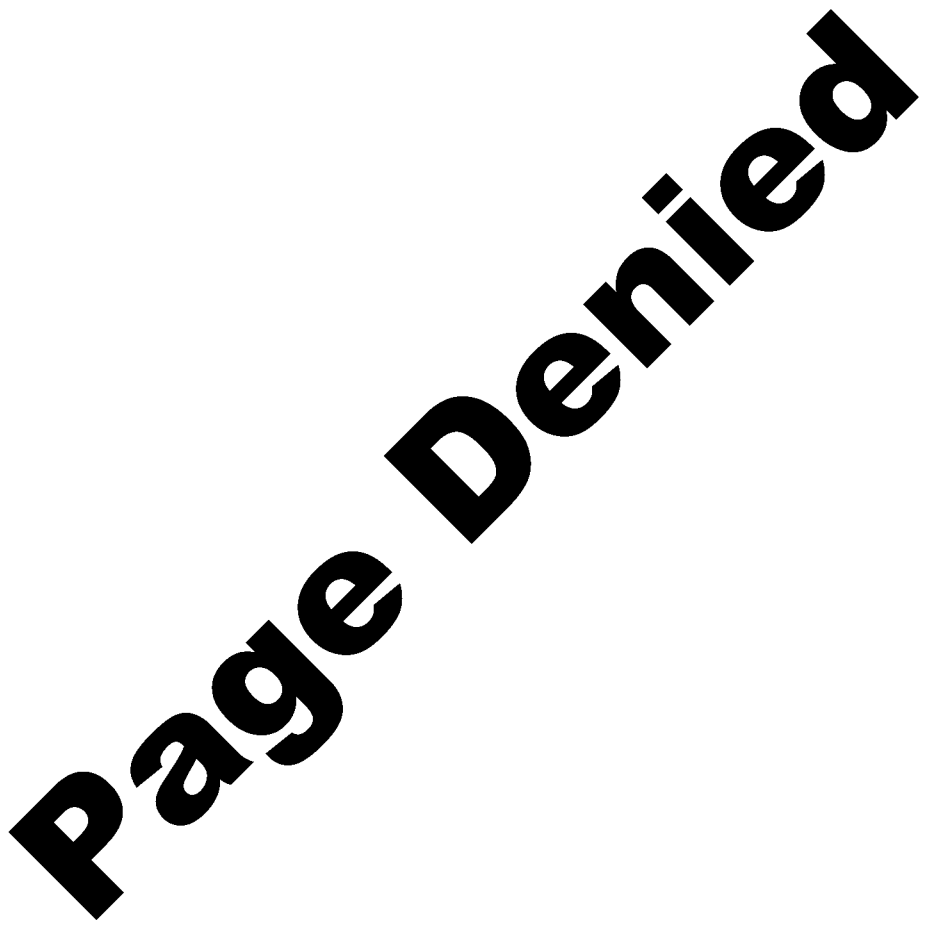

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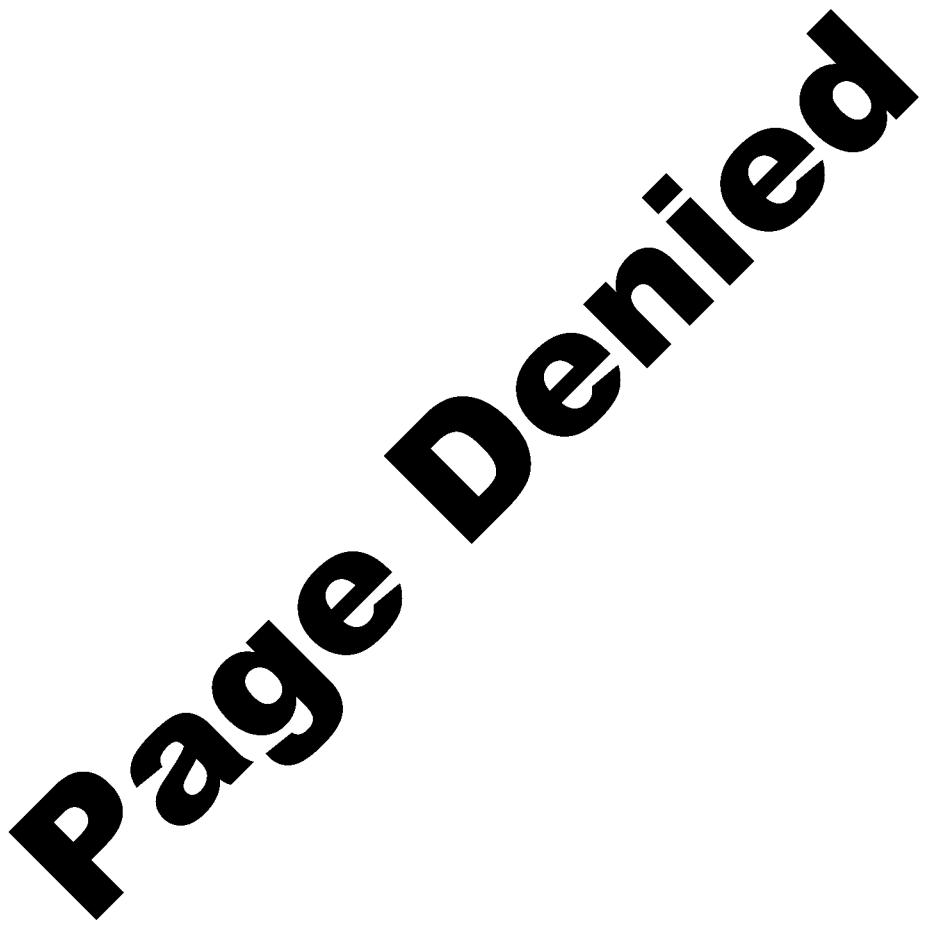

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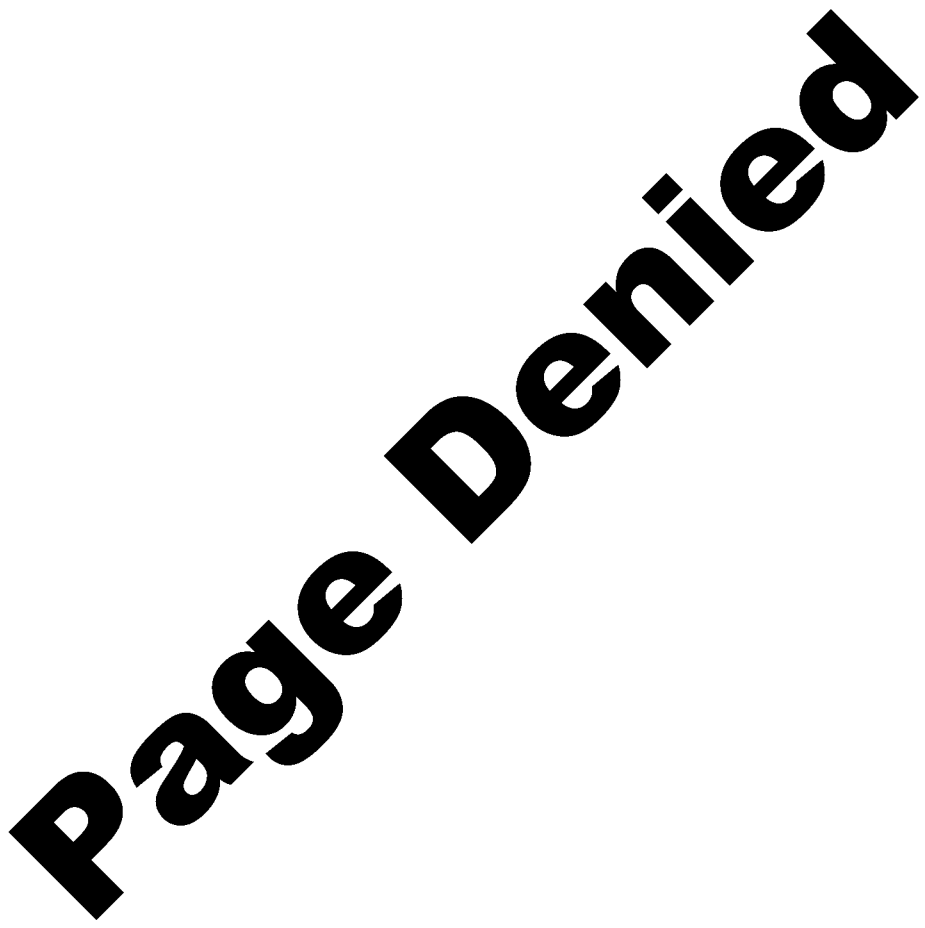

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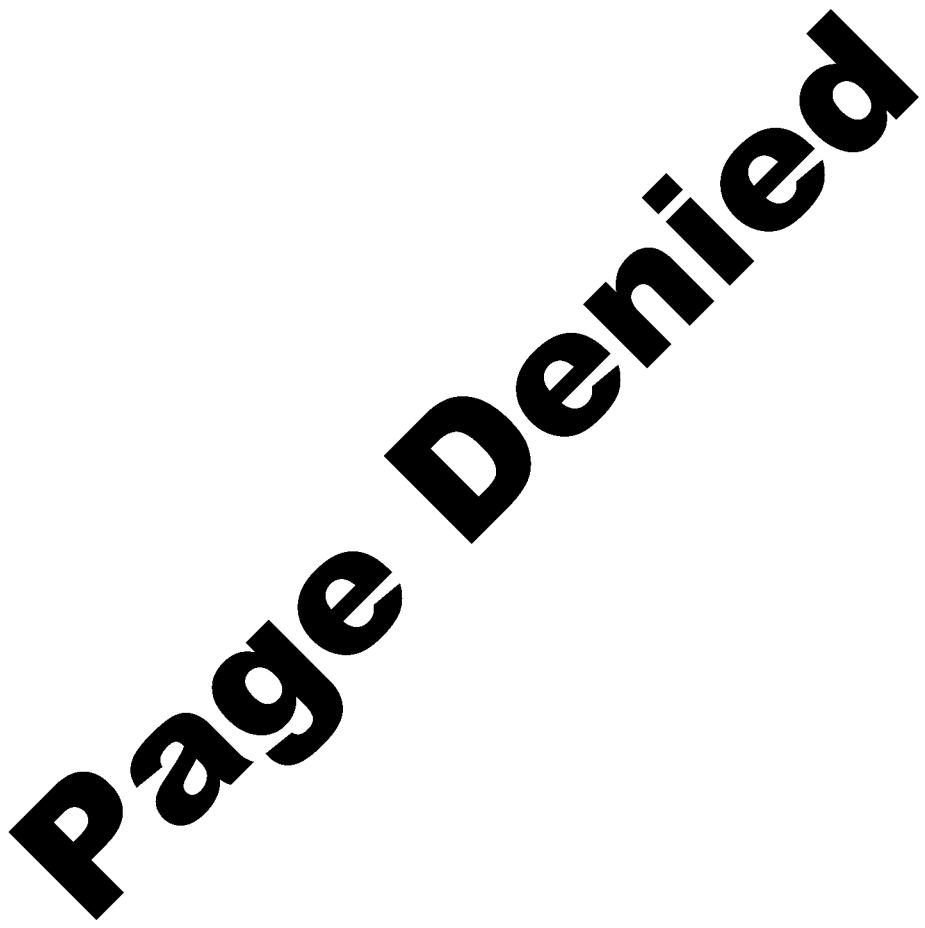

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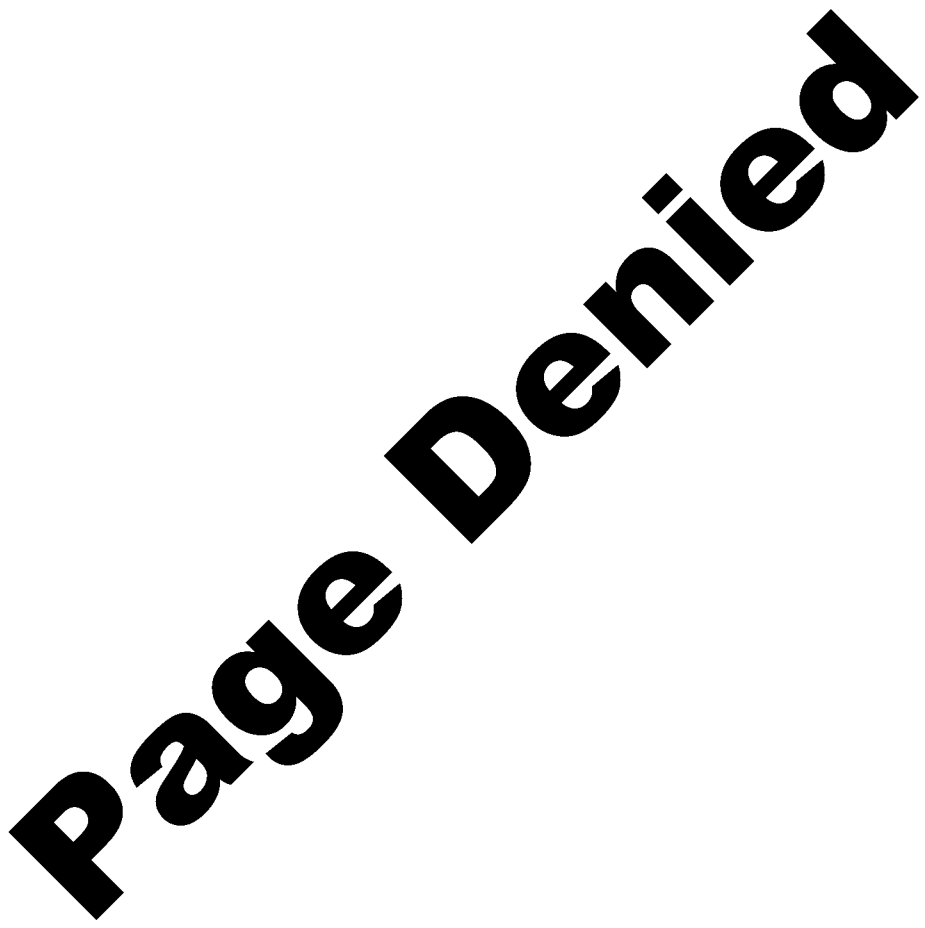

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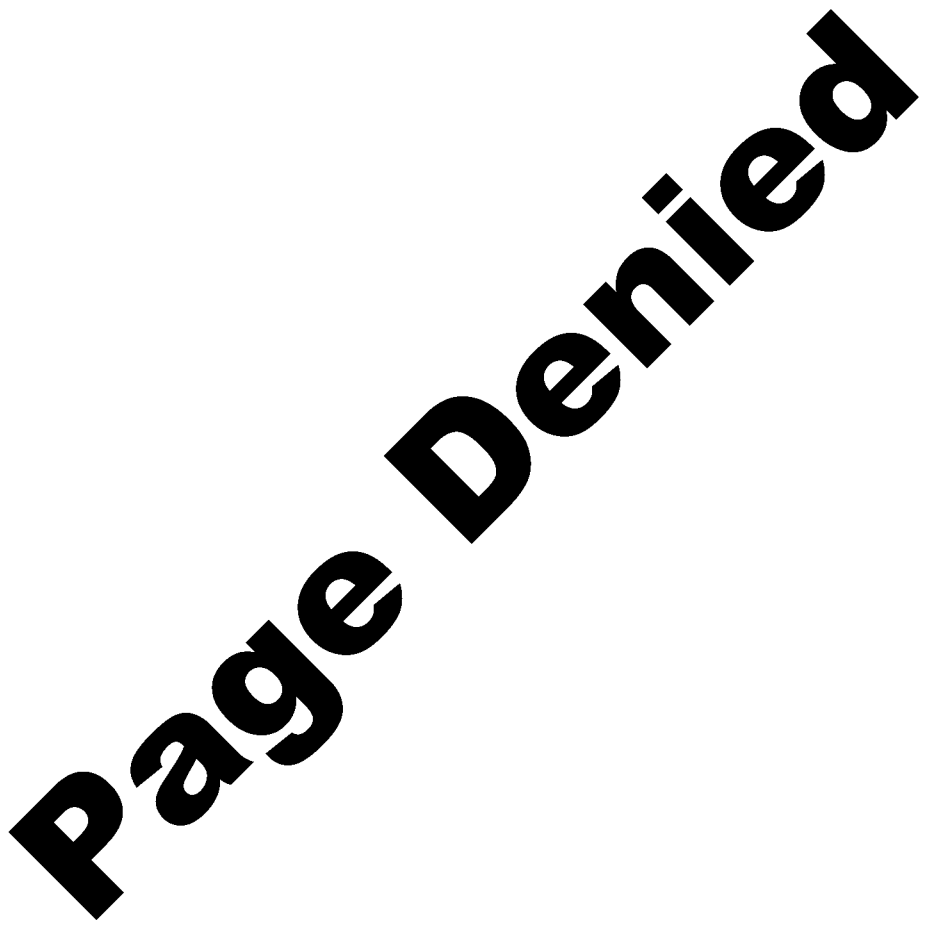

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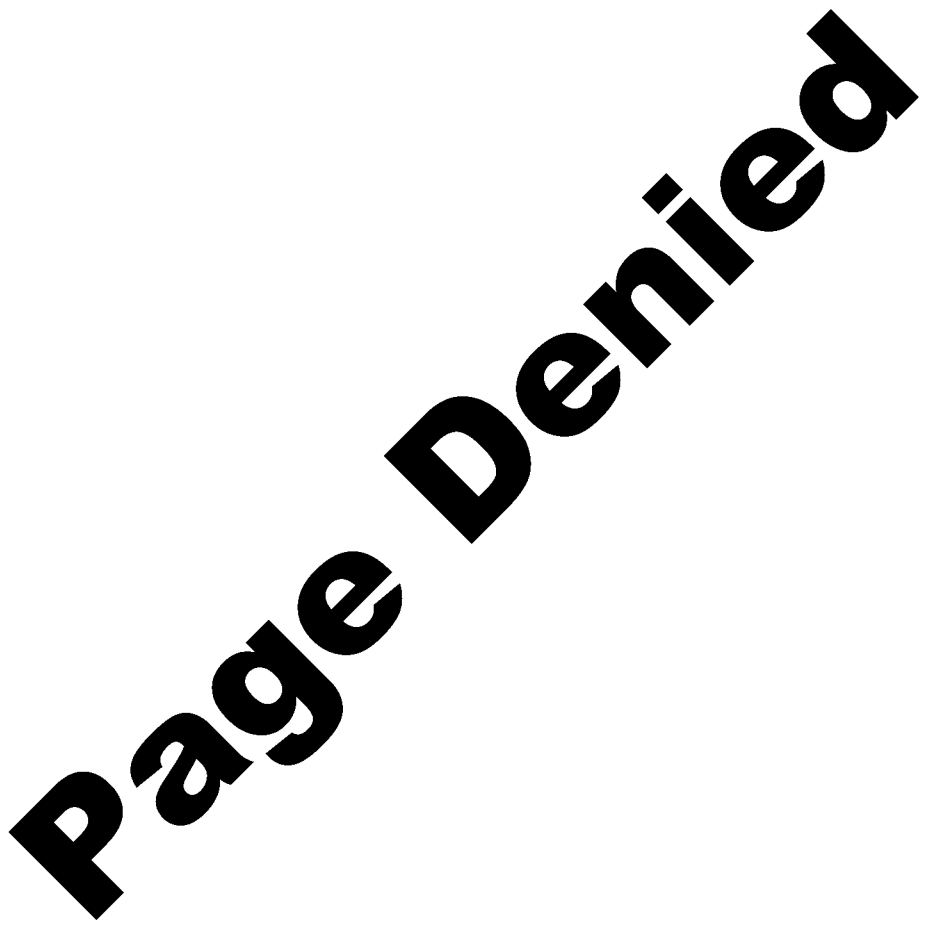

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